Soil testing in Vidarbha, Maharashtra

†2000. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether soil test has been conducted by the Department of Agriculture of the Maharashtra Government in the villages of Vidarbha area, so that cultivation can be done as per the properties of soil of that region;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) whether suitable cultivation according to the soil of Vidarbha has not been started till date; and

(d) if so, by when new crop pattern will be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The farmers are advised to apply manures and fertilizers for their crops, as per the analysis of the soil samples, and to grow crops as per soil type based on soil survey report.

(c) and (d) Cultivation of suitable crops according to the soil of Vidarbha has already started. However, the change in cropping pattern is a slow process as other factors like cost of cultivation, market price of particular crop, and individual farmers need also determine the cropping pattern.

Damage of crops by fog, hailstorm, etc. in Northern India

2001. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that potato, wheat and vegetable crops have been .damaged in Northern India due to fog and heavy hailstorms;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to provide any assistance to farmers whose crops have been damaged and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Special schemes for production of wheat, rice, etc.

†2002. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has selected hundred districts for running special schemes to increase production of wheat, rice and pulses in the country;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details of the scheme; and

(c) the details of selected districts, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) A Centrally Sponsored Scheme "National Food Security Mission" has been contemplated to enhance the production of wheat, rice and pulses during the Eleventh Five Year Plan. The National Food Security Mission will have three components *viz.,* National Food Security Mission-Rice (NFSM-Rice), National Food Security Mission-Wheat (NFSM-Wheat) and National Food Security Mission-Pulses (NFSM-Pulses).

The NFSM-Rice, NFSM-Wheat and NFSM-Pulses will be implemented in 133, 138 and 168 identified districts respectively of various States in the country.

Assessing implementation of package for suicide victims

†2003. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had constituted a Task Force under the chairmanship of Shri R. Radhakrishnan to assess the implementation of a scheme formulated for providing economic package of Rs. 17,000 crores to farmers declared by the Prime Minister as a result of suicide by the farmers;

(b) if so, when this Task Force was constituted;

(c) whether this Task Force has submitted its report to Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) No, Sir. However, the Government *vide* Order dated 10th August, 2006 constituted an Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Prof. R. Radhakrishna, Director, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR) to look into the problems of agricultural indebtedness in totality and suggest measures to provide relief to farmers across the country. The Expert Group has submitted its report. The report focuses on institutions and instruments that would strengthen the credit delivery mechanism for the farm community in particular and for rural India in general. Policy interventions and institutional reforms essential for resolving the farm crisis, which go beyond the credit delivery system, also form part of this Report.

The Report recommends as under:-

1. Immediate Credit Measures include:

Implementation of the Prime Minister's Relief Package: The needs of individual households should be taken into account with necessary flexibility. Rescheduling of loan of farmers affected by natural calamities. Credit for Rainfed Areas;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.